

*"History, despite its wrenching pain,
cannot be un-lived, but if faced with
courage, need not be lived again."
~ Maya Angelou*

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Rogue Valley Social Justice News

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John Beeson: Southern Oregon's First Civil Rights Advocate

By Vanessa Houk

It's the sort of place where the wind whispers secrets and birds come to rest in the trees before a long flight. It's a place where lives are put to rest, but stories lay waiting to be re-told. It's a place where elderly Pacific Madrones and mature Pines lean in together as if they are comfortable neighbors. The Stearns Cemetery in Talent is a place where several notable Southern Oregon pioneers are buried, including John Beeson who is remembered as Southern Oregon's first civil rights advocate.

Beeson hailed from England and immigrated to the United States in 1832 where he became an Illinois farmer. At a time when slavery divided hearts and minds, John Beeson quietly took a stand and his farm became a station for the Underground Railroad. By the early 1850's he was ready for new adventures and in 1853 he took his family west to Oregon and became a Southern Oregon pioneer.

The mid 1850's were rife with conflict between those pioneering settlers and the Native People whose lands were occupied in the name of progress. As popular opinion grew heavy with the desire for war against the Indians, Beeson became a consistent vocal advocate for peace.

In a letter to the New York Tribune, Beeson wrote, "I belong to the small minority in Oregon who believe with General Wools and Palmer, that the late war was unnecessary and cruel in the extreme, and that all the burning of property, the destruction of life and expenditure of public treasure would have been saved if the civil authorities had administered equal justice instead of calling people to arms. I have lived since the fall of 1853 in Rogue River Valley, Southern Oregon, situated between the headwaters of the Sacramento and the Willamette Valleys and have had an opportunity of knowing much of the Indian tribes, both on the plains as well as on the Pacific Coast. Notwithstanding the heart rendering statements of savage barbarity which the Oregon papers have constantly spread before the public, it is a fact that there are more murdered Indians than Indian murders; and when the whole truth is known, I believe it will appear that Indians are less savage than some who appear to be civilized."

His defense of native people was met with threat of physical harm and in May of 1856 Beeson was chased out of Oregon. He spent almost a decade traveling the East Coast giving lectures about Native American rights and in 1857 he authored, "A Plea for the Indians" which pointed out the discrepancies between the Government's treaties and the actions of their parties.

In A Plea for the Indians he wrote, "It has already been brought before the public; but as it illustrates how difficulties generally occur between the races, and, at the same time, how easily they

might be avoided, if our people, especially Government Agents, were more fully imbued with the spirit of justice and magnanimity, I will, in this connection, repeat the account.

A company of emigrants having a sick cow, which was unable to travel further, abandoned the poor animal, and left her by the way-side. The Indians, seeing she was given up, killed her for their own use. The emigrants, hearing of this, reported at Fort Laramie that the Indians had stolen and killed some of their cattle, upon which, an officer, with a detachment of thirty men, was sent to demand the thief. The Indians knowing the certainty and severity of impending punishment, for there was the hide, and even the beef, in visible possession refused, or hesitated to give up any of their number as the criminal; for they well knew that nothing which they could plead would have the least weight with their accusers.

The military order was peremptorily insisted on; and to enforce obedience, a volley was fired over their camp; and, either by design or accident, the chief fell dead in their midst. Nothing was more natural than that the Indians should, in their turn, attack the assailants. Every principle of right or honor recognized among them demanded this; and twenty-eight of the white men fell dead beneath the force of their justly-excited resentment."

Beeson went on to describe what happened next. "In consequence of this the Indians were charged with massacre, as well as robbery. "War was declared, or supposed to exist; and the following year hundreds of thousands were expended in a campaign against them, although they had, in the interim, done all they could to express their desire for peace and friendship. General Harney, with a glittering array of armed men; both horse and foot, marched on to the Plains, and were met by the Chief, who nobly came forward in advance, and plead with the officer for peace and justice, in behalf of his people."

Bodies turn to bones and dust, but words live on. Beeson returned to Oregon where he was reunited with his wife, Ann who is buried next to him and their son, Welborn.

His grave reads,

**John Beeson
Born in England Sept. 15, 1803
Died Apr. 21, 1889
A Pioneer and man of Peace**

**Directions to Stearns Cemetery from Highway 99
From Highway 99, turn onto Rapp Road. Go over the train tracks and at the stop sign, go straight. You are now on Wagner Creek Road. Stay on Wagner Creek Road until you come to Anderson Creek Road. Turn right. Just past Allen Lane, the cemetery is on the left.**

Native Tribe Seeks River Closure for Sacred Ceremony while Feds drag their heels

By Vanessa Houk

Underneath the craggy Two Sisters Mountain along the McCloud River in Shasta Lake, the ancient lands hold space for the Winnemem Wintu tribe (the middle water people) and their coming of age ceremony, but it's uncertain if the US Forest Service will honor their claim. For more than six

thousand years the Wintu people have called that area their home. As Chief Caleen Sisk explains, "Our beginning of life comes from Mt. Shasta, so all those stories up and down the river have meaning — from Yellow Jacket Mountain, to Fox Mountain, to the Sucker Pools, all these have stories that belong to the Winnemem people and songs that go with them."

The Winnemem Wintu Tribe has asked the federal government to close a small area of the McCloud River so they can hold their ceremony in privacy. Part of the issue stems from the government's denial of the authenticity of the tribe, but this is also about respect. In 2006 and 2010 the tribe held coming of age ceremonies and had difficulty with boaters who yelled obscenities at them, one woman who pulled her top down to expose her naked breasts as their boat passed the ceremony and others who disrupted their traditions with drunken revelry.

Up until 1985, the Winnemem Wintu was acknowledged by the US Government Department of the Interior as being a Native Tribe and they received federal health, education and housing benefits. At one point their family burials were moved and the federal government created an Indian Cemetery near Shasta Dam. The tribe is no longer permitted to bury their family members on land that holds many generations, land which their ancestors lived on for thousands of years, the land of their stories. In the mid-eighties their benefits abruptly ended and since then they have struggled as an unrecognized tribe. By not recognizing

ing the Wintu Winneman as a tribe, the US Government is essentially disregarding their stories, customs and the many sacred sites along the McCloud River. Their ancient village of Kaibai is now a public campground.

In April, members of the Winnemem Wintu tribe met with Randy Moore of the US Forest Service. In a calm, clear voice Caleen Sisk plead



From left to right the photo shows - Jeanne France, Tribal member; Luisa Navejas, Mt. Shasta Representative and Water Advisor; Marisa Sisk, tribal member who's celebrating her ceremony; Caleen Sisk, Chief and Spiritual Leader; Helene Sisk, Tribal member. Photo credit courtesy of Winnemem Wintu tribe.

for understanding. "To swim across the river is part of the tradition because we believe that we come into the world in the water and when our youngsters become women, they come back through the water," she explained. The coming of age ceremony must begin on June 30 and is a four day ceremony.

Sisk went on to discuss why that area of the river is sacred to her tribe, why the ceremony begins on that day, and said it has "the only puberty rock on the river when the full moon and tail end of the flowers are out and all these things are necessary".

While it remains uncertain if the US Forest Service will grant the Winnemem Wintu's private, closed off access to a small section of the river, it is clear that the tribe is moving forward. They put a call out for volunteer boaters who are willing to form a human blockade along the river in order to preserve their ceremony.

"We have to make our plans to be sure that our ceremony is held in peace and dignity," Sisk said. As we were going to press the Winnemem Wintu were told that the US Forest Service would honor the river closure, but as of June 29, they did not have a formal plan in place on how they will accomplish that. Chief Sisk is still calling on volunteers to come out and form a human blockade to ensure that the ceremony is protected. To find out the latest on what happened, please visit www.winnememwintu.us.

Health care ... we're dying for it.

ACA Woefully Inadequate

Reform offers little more than opportunity for Oregon health care activists.

By Jason Houk

With the Affordable Care Act (ACA) clearing the Supreme Court hurdle, Democrats are celebrating and Republicans are lamenting but the sad reality is the legislation promises little for the working poor.

The ACA does include protections such as a ban on refusal of coverage for pre-existing conditions, the required full coverage of limited basic primary care, and the extension of coverage of adult children under parental insurance. Unfortunately the ACA remains woefully inadequate. The legislation excludes more than 26 million Americans who remain uninsured and tens of millions remaining underinsured.

In Oregon, a 2011 survey found that 560,000 Oregonians are uninsured and it is estimated that the cost of uncompensated care for uninsured and underinsured adults and children will exceed \$1.1 billion this year.

Furthermore, the ACA continues the unfair financing of health care where costs are disproportionately paid by middle and low income workers and families.

The act perpetuates a system that is neither humane nor cost effective where hospital emergency rooms continue to be the only health care resources available.

Clark Newhall, executive director of Health Justice writes "The system is, in effect a subsidy to the health insurance industry. We should instead move to get rid of that industry, it is simply not sustainable."

As our system of private insurance continues to collapse, Americans can expect to pay more for less. High deductibles and high co-pays will lead to continued self-rationing, delayed care, and continued widespread medical bankruptcy.

Health care reform proponents point out that the ACA creates no effective mechanism for shifting priorities to healthy lifestyles and preventative care, nor for reforming incentives that encourage abuse. It encourages price inflation and perpetuates massive avoidable administrative waste and fragmentation of the system. Meanwhile, Medicaid, Medicare and the ACA itself remain under political attack.

"A strength of the ACA was the effort to guarantee access to health care through Medicaid to the lowest-income workers not already eligible. That guarantee has now been turned into a struggle to be fought state-by-state," reports an email response from Health Care

for All Oregon (HCAO) a coalition organization working to mobilize a statewide movement for an equitable, comprehensive, publicly funded, high quality universal health care system serving everyone in Oregon.

HCAO warns, "This deplorable blow to low income working families weakens the extension of the principle of social insurance in health care. It reinforces the need for a system that truly secures the human right to health care for everyone."

Ultimately, the ACA will fail to resolve the health care access and costs crises. It does not secure the human right to health care, which can only be guaranteed through a massive social movement.

In Oregon a coalition of nonprofits, unions, activists, physicians and health care professionals have joined together with HCAO to advocate for universal health care in Oregon. A truly publicly funded system that guarantees the fundamental right of health care to everyone.

Following the lead of the successful health care campaign in Vermont, the HCAO hopes to create radical change. The mission is to change the political will by creating a grassroots campaign building power from the ground up. Advocates point to a single-payer model where everyone is covered automatically and doctors and hospital charges are negotiated with cost controls for long term sustainability. Advocates hope to create this new system based on health care as a human right. Health care reformists point out that successful models could spread across the nation from state to state rather than working from the top down by the federal government.

The United States spends more on health care than any other country in the world, almost one out of every five dollars spent in America is spent on health care. For that price we get very little value. Our healthy life expectancy, ranks only 29th in the world and our infant mortality rate ranks 30th. Certainly we can do better.

Locally, folks can connect to the campaign through Southern Oregon Jobs with Justice at www.sojwj.org.

For more information on Oregon's health care reform campaigns visit: www.healthcareforalloregon.org www.singlepayeroregon.org



Celebrating Centennial Year of Woody Guthrie's Legacy

By Vanessa Houk

For the past twenty five years Anne Feeney has traveled across the country singing songs about the working class. A self-described union-maid, hell raiser and political activist, Feeney organizes with words and inspires with songs.

"I've been 'comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable' since I graduated from high school in 1968. The Vietnam War and the Civil Rights Movement shaped my conscience and consciousness. I worked for a dozen years or so as a trial attorney, and served as President of the Pittsburgh Musicians' Union. For the last 25 years I was really living my dream... on the road 200+ days a year... all over the US and Canada, and then Sweden, Ireland and Denmark. It has been my privilege to spend most of my waking hours with people who are trying to make a difference in this world... people on strike, or in a union or community organizing drive, or defending



Anne Feeney

women's rights, the environment, human rights ... working to end poverty and racism ... teaching peace," she says. To celebrate the centennial year of Woody Guthrie's birthday, Feeney will visit Ashland on July 7 at the United Congregational Church (717 Siskiyou Blvd, Ashland). Doors open at 7 pm and the show begins at 7:30 pm. Proceeds will benefit Healthcare for all Oregon Campaign and tickets are \$10 suggested donation with no-one turned away for a lack of ability to pay. Feeney will play songs written or inspired by Woody Guthrie and she will perform with musical guests and friends Mark Ross and Adam Moss. Ross is "America's most unknown folk-singer". Moss will be on the fiddle. Get ready for an inspiring, foot stomping good time.

Opening for the trio will be Pete Herzog, a local blues musician. Following in the tradition of Woody Guthrie, the Herzog family has long been a friend to social justice causes.

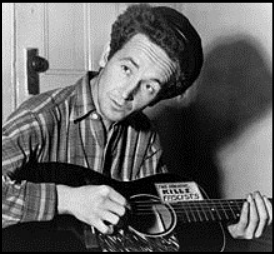
In the 1930's, in the years of the Great Depression, Guthrie traveled with migrant workers from his home in Oklahoma to California and during those months he learned traditional folk and blues songs. Less than a decade later he wrote a song that nearly every American knows, "This Land is Your Land", although many folks might not realize that there are several verses that were often kept out of recordings.

The fourth and sixth verses are:

*"As I went walking, I saw a sign there,
And on the sign there, it said No trespassing.
But on the other side, it didn't say nothing!
That side was made for you and me.*

*In the squares of the city,
In the shadow of a steeple;
By the relief office, I'd seen my people.
As they stood there hungry,
I stood there asking,
Is this land made for you and me?"*

Anne Feeney, Mark Ross and Adam Moss's "Hard Travelin' Tour is sponsored by the Southern Oregon Central Labor Council, Citizens for Peace and Justice, WILPF (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Healthcare for all Oregon and Southern Oregon Jobs with Justice.



Woody Guthrie

I'll see your social consciousness and I'll raise you direct action.

Occupy Ashland's Legalize Sleep Campaign “Walk a Mile” Shoe Project

by Vanessa Houk

There are pairs of holey old tennis shoes, name brand boots, high heels, flip-flops, tiny brightly colored children's shoes with Velcro closures, men's dress shoes and work boots. When it's completed there will be 213 pairs of shoes along Main Street in Ashland before the parade on the 4th, empty shoes, each representing a single homeless person who lives in our city.

There are at least 213 homeless people in Ashland. At least 71 of those people are children. Let that sink in for just a minute.

In January the cities homelessness steering committee sent a group of volunteers out on the streets to discover how many homeless people were living in Ashland. The task force spent many hours documenting their findings and those statistics are the basis for Occupy Ashland's "Legalize Sleep, Walk a Mile" campaign. Ashland does not have any sort of a homeless shelter

or day use center and while technically it isn't illegal to be homeless in Ashland, it is illegal to fall asleep in a public space inside city limits between the hours of 9 pm to 8 am. Homeless people in Ashland are ticketed under the camping ordinance and unpaid fines can result in arrests.

Many of Ashland's homeless are working class people. They pump your gas, clean your hotel rooms and then at the end of the day they try to sneak in a few hours of sleep before the next day begins all over again. You might be interacting with some of Ashland's homeless and not even realize they are homeless since many do their very best to wear a cloak of invisibility.



As a community, what we will we do about this? It seems that the city is more interested in cracking down on the poor than in being proactive and offering folks a hand off the streets. Recently the city council passed an Exclusion Zone ordinance in the downtown area which further punishes some homeless people without the right to due process. Carol Voisin was the lone "no" vote on that ordinance. In November we want you to remember that the other five male city counselors voted "yes" and vote for people who see that sleep is a human right.

CUBA NOTES– Part 2 (aka my own rum diaries)

~ a multi-part series about my Cuba impressions from a month in country

by Karen Jeffery

CUBAN CASAS

Similar to B&Bs, casas particulares are rooms available in Cuban homes, encouraged by record tourism - and last November in Varadero, the relaxing of regulations. We spend our entire month in homes rather than hotels, where our hosts are surprised and pleased to see Americans and ask us to tell our friends that Cuba is safe and welcomes them. We find various casas through recommendations by our Cuba iPhone app¹ or hosts of other casas. Often they simply call ahead to their friend in the next town, checking availability. As our telephones don't work in Cuba, this is quite helpful. We tend to stay in city centers (World Heritage colonial towns) for walking ease and to avoid expensive taxi fares. On a couple occasions we take the bait offered by owners as they mob bus stations seeking visitors, and each time it works out fine. A government fee of \$5 per room per night (whether booked or not) necessitates minimum occupancies (hence the rush by owners, reps, taxi drivers, and jinteros), and on the plus side, there is a level of hospitality and care taken by hosts to ensure happy guests.



With few exceptions, the homes we stay in are beautiful spaces - colonial, neoclassical, baroque, or art deco homes with high ceilings, interior courtyards and gardens, rooftops for happy hour views. Bedrooms are all air conditioned, most have hot water, and refrigerators are de rigueur. Breakfast is offered at every casa, and while seeking breakfast elsewhere, we find out why. Cubans eat breakfast at home. Other than coffee, and an occasional freshly-squeezed OJ or grilled sandwich, there is no breakfast on the street. No Dunkin Donuts, no Denny's, no IHOPs. Gratefully.

Casas are inexpensive, ranging from \$15 to \$30 per night per room. Tourist hotel rooms go from \$90 to \$500 (with a \$1000 option in Varadero). Negotiating tips to help avoid any check-out problems:

1. Make sure you're talking the same currency (there are two in Cuba)
2. Price per room or per person?
3. Write down the agreed price.
4. Get clear agreement on written price before parking your bags.

I am surprised by how few hosts speak English, though several speak Italian and French, both of which get me by more than a few times; although limited Spanish and sign language works just fine throughout the country. I tell them "estoy aprendiendo" (I'm learning). They laugh and are understanding. Those who speak English learn at University or by practicing with tourists. One woman admits to learning from Celine Dion CDs.

I interview a casa owner in depth after she complains one afternoon about the recent devaluation of the local currency. Many of the supplies, food, and labor are bought in MN, so that her buying power is now reduced. She finds the growing competition difficult, and says that jinteros and taxi drivers are 'stealing her business' at bus and train stations. She now asks guests on arrival how they found her, since many drivers attempt to collect a \$5 finder's fee even if a guest asks for her casa specifically, instead of it being recommended by the taxi service.

Government rules and regs drive her crazy

(something we all have in common) -

- having to pay fees whether income is earned or not (\$150 per month per room)²
- having to be open and available 365 days per year
- employment limited to one worker³
- daily registration of papers and forms with immigration (physically - go to the finance office, wait in line, etc. - not online)⁴

Her casa is impeccable, the last in a series she and her husband have owned, starting with a small apartment left to her by an aunt twelve years prior. With all her complaints, she is grateful for her lifestyle and happy to have another source of income.

I think most Cubanos carrying on small business ventures are grateful for any additional income. Still, major income discrepancies are negligible, and due to a shared social contract, any large wealth would be shameful. There is poverty, despite basic needs being met, but there are no homeless in Cuba, no panhandlers - like the 83-year old woman I met in Ashland, standing in 28-degree weather to raise money to support three grandchildren she's raising.

In Cienfuegos we book a fabulous suite of rooms on the water, but when we arrive by taxi, our room has been filled. We'd been warned. Some casa owners, due to the daily \$5 fee, move in guests even if they have reservations...bird in the hand. Rx: Arrive early in the day.

Over the course of our month on the island, we enjoy a few memorable casas particulares: Margot's in Habana Vieja. In the business for twelve years, Margot goes beyond the call - boiling and chilling water for guests, leaving out ample fresh fruit, refusing any payment for eggs, bread, and other food we use...and for laundry service, storing our suitcase while we explore the rest of the island, and holding goods I leave for a friend to pick up.

Norma and Jorge's in Varadero, where we arrive on Jorge's sixtieth birthday. Initially they apologize for it, then invite us to the party - about forty friends celebrating, many musicians playing, much salsa dancing, tamales de province, crab du casa, half a pig cooking all day, numerous sides, and a table of rum and mixers. Happy Birthday, Jorge! At Maria's lovely suite in Puerto Padre, her son is tour guide for the May 1st (International Workers Day) celebration, beach and disco, and Maria nurses me through a couple days of Batista's revenge with special teas, medicines, and care. Her lobster is famous!

Chocolate and Dalianis in Trinidad was our favorite for all sorts of reasons. Amid the red-tiled rooftops and pastel-colored houses, framing the cobblestone streets of this World Heritage town, we chance by a casa offering a fabulous suite of rooms - two bedrooms (3 beds and yes, a/c), living and dining rooms, bathroom (hot water), a lanai, patio, and rooftop for watching Trinidad, clouds and mountains, and the world go by. \$15 per night. Best value of the entire trip! [more in the food chapter]

Casas are all so unique and special. They keep us from the 'hotel experience' and bring us closer to the real Cuba. Hosts are informal ambassadors of their country, and getting to know their families is one of the best parts of our trip.

1. *Havana Good Time, by Conner Gorry: a rich intro to all things Havana - casas and hotels, paladars and restaurants, music and art scene, museums, galleries, attractions, money changing, transportation, neighborhoods, shopping...*
2. *In Varadero the fee is higher due to the 'touristic zone' at \$200 per room per month.*
3. *The owner uses four part-timers, having tried working one girl, but finding it so much work they inevitably quit. The policy is to encourage the hiring of family members.*
4. *The paperwork astounds. Nothing is handled online due to dreadful internet service, hence an astonishing amount of papers and forms and lines...and jobs.*

Look for Part 1 in last issue. Watch for Part 3 in upcoming Ashland Free Press.

Are You FIRED Up?

*Do you want to be
part of the solution?*

The Ashland Free Press is primarily supported by donations. This little newspaper aims to be a voice for the working class. We view the Rogue Valley through a social justice lens and do our best to report on the good work that is happening throughout the valley. **Your financial contributions keep us in print.** Your notes of encouragement strengthen us. We save each one! Donating is easy. Checks or money orders can be mailed to Ashland Free Press, 258 A Street, #1, Ashland, Oregon 97520

Thank you for helping us to continue to do what we love!

Jason and Vanessa Houk,
AFP Editors and Publishers

Special thanks to G.M.K

Jackson County Move to Amend and (P)Raising (Mc)Cain on Citizens United

by Andy Seles

John McCain, 2008 GOP presidential nominee, has broken ranks with many of his fellow Republicans. McCain is critical of the Supreme Court ruling that allows individuals and corporations to make unlimited donations to Political Action Committees (PACs). The Associated Press quotes McCain's recent PBS "NewsHour" interview as specifically critical of casino magnate Sheldon Adelson's \$10 million contribution to a pro-Romney super PAC: "That is a great deal of money. And, again, we need a level playing field, and we need to go back to the realization that Teddy Roosevelt had: that we have to have a limit on the flow of money and that corporations are not people."

McCain calls the Supreme Court's 2010 Citizens United decision "the most misguided, naive, uninformed, egregious decision of the United States Supreme Court in the 21st century." These are strong words from someone supporting a presidential candidate who famously told a heckler at the Iowa State Fair, "corporations are people, my friend." Well, yes, corporations may be made up of people (according to McCain, this is what Romney really meant), but most readers will agree that, as artificial entities, they should not actually have the rights of natural persons. This, in fact, is what a May poll of independent voters showed: "The poll found that 73 percent of all voters—including majorities of Republicans, Democrats and independents—believe there should be limits on contributions to political campaigns. That contrasted with just 21 percent of voters who said such limits would violate free-speech rights."

McCain conveniently forgot Romney's answer to the heckler's "No, they're not," retort: "Of course they are," Romney said. "Everything corporations earn ultimately goes to people. Where do you think it goes?"

I don't know about you, but I'm not holding my breath for a check from Bain Capital.

Partisan politics aside, the groundswell against *Citizens United* is mounting. As I wrote in APR Issue 9 (March, 2012), the Ashland City Council dropped the ball in failing to adopt a resolution, largely promoted by Occupy Ashland, calling on Congress to amend the Constitution and overturn *Citizens United*. By the time this issue goes to press, they may have redeemed themselves by adopting a November ballot initiative, largely promoted by a group of "grey panthers" from Mountain Meadows.

Citizens on the Right and the Left who see *Citizens United* as THE elephant in the room formed Jackson County Move to Amend (JCMTA) at a June 9 meeting in Talent. Sixty people attended, representing towns as far away as Grants Pass and Butte Falls. The group is in the process of officially affiliating with the National "Move to Amend" organization, one of several organizations that have put forth initiatives to overturn *Citizens United*.

CachedIn a nutshell, MTA calls for "an Amendment to the US Constitution to Abolish Corporate Personhood and the doctrine of Money as Speech." The official wording of the Move to Amend document can be found at:

movetoamend.org/model-resolution-councils-organizations.

A major goal of JCMTA is to support passage of MTA resolutions by cities and towns throughout Jackson County, then take the resolution to the county and state levels.

**Stop by the Peace House booth
on your way into Lithia Park
July 4 to learn more and to sign
the MTA petition.**



Visit us on
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City of Ashland Changes Bus Fares

Ashland residents who hop on the bus next week will pay double the current fare. The Ashland City Council voted to eliminate a long term Rogue Valley Transportation District (RVTD) subsidy that they say did not increase bus usage. Residents will now pay \$2 for bus fare inside Ashland, rather than the \$1 they might be used to paying.

The city of Ashland has long kept bus fares low inside Ashland which rewarded bus riders with half off fares, but residents failed to utilize the service to an extent where the city council could see that the subsidy was a wise financial choice. In less than half a dozen years, ridership fell by more than two thirds.

The Ashland City Council did vote to increase funding for free bus passes for low income Ashland residents and have budgeted \$33,000 towards that program. Previously the city spent around \$10,000 annually which provided transportation access to low income seniors and other folks.

The Ashland Parks Department's Senior Center is distributing some of these passes to both seniors and youth. High School and Middle School aged children who reside in households who are under the Federal Poverty Income guidelines qualify for these services and low income seniors, as well as families of high school and middle school students can call

the Senior Center at 541-488-5342 to get information on how to get free bus passes.

The Ashland welfare office is the other distribution center. Low income Ashland residents who are between the ages of 18 and 65 can connect with the South Valley Community Human Services Office at 541-482-2041 for information.

**Rogue Valley Businesses
can save 93% off RVTD
fares for employees**

RVTD has a program called U-Pass which offers a huge discount on monthly bus passes for businesses who qualify. Businesses can encourage their workers to use public transportation by signing up for this program.

For just \$3.85 a month (per employee), businesses can add this service to their benefits packages and might also qualify for a business energy tax credit (**Oregon Business Energy Tax Credit**). Call RVTD for more information at (541) 608-2411.

PEACE HOUSE

Happy 30th Birthday!



*"Born in one world-changing moment,
living in another."*

This year Peace House celebrates 30 years, serving Ashland and the Rogue Valley

1982 - The grassroots movement that was soon to lift the shadow of nuclear destruction from the human race had spread across the nation and the world. In Ashland, a small group conceived the idea of having the city declare itself a Nuclear Free Zone. Repulsed by the mayor and city council, they organized a petition and referendum drive that resulted in a victory at the polls. Peace House was then formed to sustain action to halt the nuclear arms race.

Join us!

2012 - Today a growing membership builds momentum and canvasses Ashland for a Move to Amend petition, to take back our democracy by eliminating money from politics. Corporations are NOT people, and money is NOT speech. Again, with a reluctant mayor and city council, Peace House and affiliated organizations are working to organize a ballot measure.

Celebrate with us!

On October 19th Peace House will formally celebrate its 30 years with a special awards dinner featuring Medea Benjamin, founder of Code Pink, as keynote speaker.

September 21st, Peace House will organize a commemoration on International Day of Peace.



*"Peace is not the absence of conflict,
but the presence of justice."*

Martin Luther King Jr.

Join the conversation on Facebook:
Peace House Ashland Oregon

Contact Ruth for information about
renting meeting and workshop spaces:
rentals@peacehouse.net

Sign up for Peace House bi-monthly Calendar,
showcasing peace and social justice events
throughout Southern Oregon.
editor@peacehouse.net

Peace House Programs

Ending War

This compelling goal remains the highest priority - campaigning to stop present and future wars, especially another "war of choice" in the Middle East, and promoting major cuts in military spending.



Alternatives to Military Recruitment

Supporting students and young adults making informed choices about service and helping service personnel whose consciences have led them to seek discharge.

Uncle Foods Diner

For 20 years, Peace House has fed Ashland's poor and challenged national policies that exacerbate US poverty. Tuesdays at 4 pm. 175 N. Main St, Ashland



*"When I give food to the poor, they call me a saint.
When I ask why they are poor,
they call me a communist."*
Dom Helder Camara

Federal Budget Education Project

Through this program Peace House educates a diverse collection of Rogue Valley citizens about the shredding of our social safety net in the name of debt and deficit reduction, when facts show that tax cuts benefitting the very wealthy, plus unjustifiably high military spending, have been the main drivers of unsustainable US debt, not domestic spending.

Non-Violence and Civil Disobedience Training

Workshops link learning to live as peaceful individuals with effectively confronting the violence pervading our world. These two pursuits are practically entwined and share a moral and spiritual urgency. Peace House regards civil disobedience as a powerful force for change and offers trainings for those planning specific actions and campaigns.



Happy Hour Peace Talks

Monthly educational events on significant peace and justice issues are held in a relaxed social environment every third Monday 5pm (starting back up September 17th) at Tabu, 76 N. Pioneer Street, Ashland.

Move to Amend

Visit Peace House 4th of July parade booth at the entrance to Lithia Park, and sign the petition.

"We, the People of the United States of America, reject the U.S. Supreme Court's *Citizens United* ruling, and move to amend our Constitution to firmly establish that money is not speech, and that human beings, not corporations, are persons entitled to constitutional rights."

Peace House has a deep involvement in this action and is leading the campaign locally to take our democracy back.

Visit the MTA website to get involved:
www.movetoamendjacksoncounty.org



www.peacehouse.net

Visit Peace House online for

- Calendar of events
- Clear Actions newsletter subscription
- educational and activist videos
- programs, issues, and actions
- public forum
- volunteer and job opportunities
- donations

Peace House promotes nonviolence, economic and social justice, and the dignity of all people. We educate residents of Ashland and the Rogue Valley on relevant issues and organize for public advocacy and civic action. We help individuals acquire the skills of nonviolent living, and we foster cooperation among organizations that share our values.

If YOU share our values, we invite you to join Peace House and become involved with many activities, programs, and campaigns.



Peace House
543 S. Mountain Ave.
Ashland, Oregon 97520
541-482-9625
www.peacehouse.net

Peace House is a sponsor of the Ashland Free Press July 4 edition. For sponsorship information call 541-622-9483

Community Solar Power Workshops

Rogue Solar is a community-driven, bulk solar purchasing program designed to help homeowners and businesses in Jackson & Josephine counties overcome the logistical and financial hurdles of going solar. Based on a highly successful model that has dramatically increased solar installations statewide, Rogue Solar is a public/private partnership between the Rogue Valley Council of Governments and RHT Energy Solutions, with support from these other partners: Solar Oregon, Energy Trust of Oregon, Rogue Federal Credit Union, Umpqua Bank, Pacific Power and the City of Ashland. Rogue Solar is offering free workshop to learn about solar and the bulk purchasing program.

Thursday, July 12, 2012 at 6:00pm – 7:00pm (sign-in at 5:45pm) at Medford Public Library
Thursday, July 19, 2012 at 6:00pm – 7:00pm (sign-in at 5:45pm) at Ashpole Community Center, Eagle Point
Thursday, July 26, 2012 at 6:00pm – 7:00pm (sign-in at 5:45pm) at Grants Pass City Hall, Grants Pass

For more information visit www.roguesolar.org, or contact Dan Moore, Planning Coordinator, RVCOG at: 541-423-1361 or email: dmoore@rvcog.org

Southern Oregon Pride 3rd Annual Fundraiser

Sunday, July 15, 2012
2:00 pm - 5:00 pm
451 Lindsay Lane, Ashland, Oregon
Minimum \$25.00 Donation at the Door
Come experience food and wine from some of the best sources in the Valley. This will be one of the few chances you will have to help support SO-Pride's ongoing educational and community services work.. For more information visit: www.sopride.org

The Ashland Free Press is Southern Oregon's source for social justice news and information. AFP is a paper for the working class. AFP aspires to be a platform for voices in the community who are not often heard. We welcome content from writers, activists, students, teachers, and beyond and we are especially seeking articles and stories which are written from a local perspective.

Our editorial policies are as follows:
Our objective is to educate the masses about social justice issues. We hope to reach as many people as possible regardless of economic status or political affiliation.
We aspire to promote positive change. Aside from education, we are looking for articles which offer some solutions. Give us a call to action. Tell us what we can do to change the status quo and you'll win our attention and admiration. Be creative and have fun and we may even ignore word counts. Articles of 400-500 words fit best.
Most importantly, *we strive to do no harm*. We want this publication to be accurate, thoughtful and fair.

Send submissions to :
ashlandfreepress@activist.com
or call the AFP Hotline 541-622-9483

Searching for a posse of white knights...

The Ashland Free Press would like to expand. Here's the thing: we have big, lofty dreams and ideas, we're passionate about shaking up and changing the status quo and we have good reasons to want to make society better (three to be exact—ages 6, 12 and 18). We started this publication because we were so hungry to be heard and now that we got a little taste of the feast that is the stage of media, we want to reach more people, plant more seeds for change and be a platform for other people to tell their stories.
Sir Lancelot are you out there?
You can think of AFP as the wild, wild west of Southern Oregon media. We don't hide our biases. We break the rules. We aren't afraid to try new things. Over the past six months readers have heard from a revived Huck Finn on the seriousness of "Move to Amend", we've circled the wagons around the disenfranchised, the knocked down and we've tried to speak the truth as we see it. Sometimes it's raw and we've probably lost a few friends along the way, but at the end of the day we feel good about what we do.
We need some foot soldiers and wordsmiths, financial supporters, distributors and reporters to cover the important beats. We need you!
Is it possible to create a news source that is not funded by advertisements? A news source that breaks away from tradition and blazes its own path? **Donating is easy.** Checks can be made to "Ashland Free Press" to 258 A Street #1, Ashland, OR. 97520. Connect with us at ashlandfreepress@activist.com or call 541-622-9483.

Two Southern Oregon Nonprofits Earn Mackenzie River Gathering Foundation Grants

Southern Oregon Jobs with Justice and Red Earth Descendants are recognized

In mid-June the McKenzie River Gathering (MRG) Foundation announced that two Southern Oregon non-profits are new recipients of grant monies which will help both groups continue with their fight for social justice.
Since 1976 MRG has given out more than twelve million dollars in grants to groups across the state of Oregon, funding groups that work for peace, human rights, environmental protection, and economic justice.
Both SOJwJ and RED have been previous grantees. McKenzie River Gathering acknowledges the grassroots organizing and educational values of these groups and awarded a \$5,000 grant to Red Earth Descendants and a \$7,000 grant to Southern Oregon Jobs with Justice.

The goals of Red Earth Descendants include working to preserve native values and customs, to create healthy sustainable community and to connect indigenous people in order to celebrate and honor their culture. They host a four day annual elder-youth conference which is one of several annual events. This tribal living event features native crafts, games and survival skills and is open to anyone to wants to attend. Other annual events include Winter Storytelling, Spring Native Stick Games, World Peace and Prayer Day and Fall First Nations Day/Native EcoSymposium. RED holds monthly socials and is perhaps best known for their benefits for Grandma Aggie and the 13 Indigenous Grandmothers.

Recognizing that health care is a human right; members of Southern Oregon Jobs with Justice have launched a campaign to bring health care for all Oregonians to the forefront of public dialog and to work to create a single payer health care system here in Oregon. Following Vermont's example, organizers are just getting started and will be gathering health care stories, a photo campaign and more. More than 18,000 Americans die each year because they do not have adequate access to health care. SOJwJ wants to work towards changing that. Other SOJwJ campaigns include building a Wobbly monument to remember the heroic efforts of more than a hundred men who crossed over the Siskiyou in 1911, the Oregon Fair Trade Campaign which encourages cities to agree to buy their uniforms from businesses who treat workers fairly rather than from sweat shops. Ashland passed a sweatshop free purchasing agreement ordinance and is part of a consortium of cities who are committed to the values of fair trade and ensuring that tax dollars are not used to promote child labor, discrimination and unsafe working conditions.

With the support of MRG, positive change continues to happen in Southern Oregon. For more information about the MRG foundation, visit: www.mrgfoundation.org.

Our Changing Climate:

What's Going to Happen Here; What Can I Do About It?

Monday, August 6th, 2012
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Room 118, Science Hall,
Southern Oregon University Campus,
Siskiyou Blvd, Ashland

A FREE event for the public and those who live in Southern Oregon's Rogue Valley region and would like to learn more about local climate change consequences, or would like to become involved in addressing the issue.

Ashland School of Free Living Now Accepting Students and Teachers

By Aaron

Since the beginning of time, communities have relied on free education from each other. It takes a whole village to raise a child"and If we don't teach the boys, they'll burn down the village"are some of the old sayings. More recently though, governments have created school systems to teach us only what they want us to know. The governments are educating us to make their system stronger, instead of educating us to make our communities stronger. Now, they are trying to charge us with tuitions to learn what they want?
We are now remembering we can teach ourselves what we want to learn, for free!

The Ashland Free Press is offering this space for community members who want to be part of free school education opportunities. We are looking for teachers on subjects of sustainability, self-determination, independent media and community building skills. Watch this space for more information and schedules of upcoming classes.

For more information or to schedule your own classes, contact AshlandFreePress@Activist.com or call 541-622-9483.


Labor Night at the Ballpark

Everyone is invited to a free night of baseball, courtesy of organized labor

All workers and their families are welcome to enjoy a "Labor Night" with the Southern Oregon Riverdaws on July 28, 2012 at 7 PM as they meet up with the Reno Bullets.

Admission is free as this event is sponsored by the Southern Oregon Labor Council and various local unions. No ticket is necessary. Pack the park with union pride!

Game time is 7 pm at the Harry and David Field located at 2929 S. Pacific Highway in Medford.



Ashland Cash Mobs: "Keeping it Local!"

Take a walk through Ashland's downtown and count the number of empty storefronts. It's been worse in years past, but every vacant store is a reminder of broken dreams. Let's face it; the economy has hurt our friends and neighbors. As we've watched too many Ashland businesses close, we wanted to do something that would help boost local businesses in a unique and fun way. It isn't a coincidence that we were listening to community radio (KSKQ 89.5 FM) when we first heard about cash mobs.

The story told of this growing movement where people were organizing events which encouraged folks to shop at local businesses. It's a simple idea where a group gathers together with the intention of spending cash at a chosen business (\$20 is suggested) en masse. "Cash Mobs" are popping up all over the country and even internationally.

The beauty of this idea is not found in that initial "mobbing", but that by encouraging locals to try new businesses (or old businesses that they may have wandered away from) will ultimately build stronger relationships between mob participants and the business owners. It's what happens after the mob that is really exciting.

Marty's Legacy

"Tell them we need more turkeys."
Those were the last words that Marty Bryant said to me one evening in November, some years ago. I was standing in the doorway of the Armory



after dropping off a donation of food for the community meal and talking to this gentle man about what else they still needed to pull off another Thanksgiving dinner and that was his response. Marty was an activist and an organizer and he will be remembered for all of the work he did to fight hunger in the Rogue Valley.

Caring Friends and Uncle Foods Diner were Marty's passions and the work he started goes on.

On June 22, Marty lost his battle with lung cancer. He is survived by Sylvia his wife of 30 years and their daughter Kayla.

"Caring Friends and the Community Thanksgiving Dinner was his heart's work and very important to him and his favorite place in the world was Omar's," said Kayla.

I once had the opportunity to tell Marty that he was one of my heroes and I remember he seemed sort of uncomfortable and laughed that off, but as I write this I hope that the message is carried forth anyway. We do need more turkeys. We need to help other and live a life of kindness.

Such is Marty's legacy.
Condolences may be sent to the Bryant family 26360 SW Canyon Creek Road, No. 203, Wilsonville, OR 97070.

Did You Know?
According to Dying for Coverage, "the latest report by Families USA, 72 Americans die each day, 500 Americans die every week and approximately Americans 2,175 die each month, due to lack of health insurance.

Occupy Ashland Presents:

Movie Night @ Peace House! The Foreclosure Education Series

Occupy Ashland Movie night is the third Friday of every month. This month we are taking a break from the Foreclosure movies and showing The Future Of Food. This movie is highly recommend for anyone who wants to know why GMO foods are dangerous.Come join us for education and discussion. Doors open 6:30, movies start at 7 p.m.

- July 20th: The Future Of Food.
- August 17th: Thrive

For questions or more information please contact occupyashland@gmail.com.

For us the hard part is choosing a business since we know there are so many deserving, locally owned places that can benefit from the extra advertising and attention that these cash mobs bring. We have a few things that we look for and business names are put into our mob jar where we randomly draw names from each month. We want to reward businesses which are socially and environmentally conscience and especially look for businesses that support social justice causes in some way. Our cash mob jar is getting full, but we always welcome your suggestions.

Pickled Planet (225 Water Street) was the site of our first Ashland Cash Mob in April and since then we have mobbed **Grilla Bites** on the plaza (47 N Main Street) and **SunStone Artisan Bakery** at the Tuesday Growers and Crafters Market (National Guard Armory 1420 E. Main Street). Our next Ashland Cash Mob will be in August at a date to be announced. Contact ashlandfreepress@activist.com for more information.

Occupy Ashland Foreclosure Working Group

Occupy Ashland's Foreclosure Working Group is now available for speaking engagements and house parties. If you, your organization or friends would like to understand more about how the Foreclosure debacle is affecting everyone's lives and not just home owners. For more information or to schedule an event, contact Project REconomy in Medford (previously Good Grief America). www.projectreconomy.org

Occupy Ashland GA Moves to Lithia Park Entrance

Starting July 8, Occupy Ashland General Assemblies will be meeting at the entrance to Lithia Park. The day and time remain the same, Sundays at 2 pm. The General Assembly is open the all and is an opportunity to plug into the various actions and to make proposals and announcements to the group. For more information check out Occupy Ashland on Group page on Facebook or visit their website: www.occupyashlandoregon.org .

Occupy Grants Pass Summer Schedule

Weekly demonstration/rally Thursdays 4-5:30p.m. in front of the Josephine County Courthouse, 500 N.W. Sixth St., Grants Pass.

First Thursday demonstration/rally on the 7th St. Bridge near Riverside Park, 4-5:30p.m. Some members of our group will still rally in front of the courthouse on first Thursday as described above.

Our General Assembly is the third Saturday each month, 1-3p.m. near the white gazebo in Riverside Park at 304 E.Park St.,Grants Pass. Demonstration/ rally 12:00-1:00p.m. on the 7th St. Bridge near Riverside Park.

Bring a sign that expresses how you feel about the 1% purchasing our congress, leaving the 99% with high unemployment or under-employment, foreclosures, debt and war injuries and trauma, lack of health care and education opportunities, etc. Occupy Grants Pass is not a place to promote your particular candidate for President or other office. For details, contact Jerry Reed of Citizens for Peace and Justice at 541-474-6847 or e-mail at vgr707@gmail.com.

Occupy Medford General Assemblies Saturday

Occupy Medford General Assemblies are Saturdays, 10 AM in Alba Park in Medford. Everyone is invited.